

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Amendments to the Claims

Original claims 1-25 and previously added claims 26, and 28 - 36 remain in this application. No new claims have been added by this amendment or the dependency of any claims changed.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103

The Examiner rejected claim 25 and 26, 27 and 28 - 30, saying they were rendered obvious by U.S. Patent 5,201,627 (Biedenbach) in view of U.S Patent No. 2,911,690 (Sanford).

Claims 25 and 26

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejection of claim 25 and 26 on the basis that Biedenbach in combination with Sanford anticipates the claim.

First, the Examiner has not shown that Biedenbach teaches all of the limitations of claim 25, specifically: "means supporting at least one side of said wood structural members to limit deflection thereof...." The Examiner has not shown how element 10 of Biedenbach limits deflection of the wood structural members that receive the wood screw fasteners.

Second, by this paper and by the previous amendment, claim 25 has been amended to specifically claim an edge-face-to-edge-face arrangement of the plurality of wood structural members. Note by this amendment, it is hoped that the abutting arrangement of the relatively narrower edge faces has been made clear and will be understood as different from the arrangement taught by either Biedenbach or Sanford. See the Examiner's Office Action of August 18, 2008 at page 4, regarding claim 27. Applicants

believe that joining wood members in edge-face-to-edge-face abutting arrangement with screws is not taught by any combination of the references cited by the Examiner. Applicant agrees that Sanford shows edges in alignment, but Sanford does not show members where "each of said wood structural members is formed with two opposed and substantially parallel edge faces and two opposed and substantially parallel side faces, said opposed and substantially parallel edge faces being comparatively narrower than the opposed and substantially parallel side faces, wherein one of each pair of opposed edge faces of each structural member abuts another edge face of said pair of opposed edge faces of a different one of said plurality of structural members" as is now called for in both claims 25 and 26.

To make the abutting arrangement of the edge faces of the wood structural members even more clear, Applicants have added language from claim 3 to claims 25 and 26 that describe the abutting arrangement of the wood structural members in terms of their arrangement with the screw: "said screw fasteners are positioned so as to extend from edge face to edge face in said proximal wood structural members and into the edge face of the distal structural member, and generally parallel to the side faces of said distal structural member..." Again, no such arrangement is taught by Sanford.

It is believed that no new matter has been added by these amendments. Support for these amendments is found in the drawings.

Allowance of claims 25 and 26 and their dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Claim 27

Claim 27 has been cancelled and all of its limitations incorporated into claim 26.

Claims 28 through 30

The Examiner rejected claims 28 through 30 saying they are obvious in light of U.S. Patent 5,201,627 (Biedenbach) in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,911,690 (Sanford).

Claims 28 through 30 now depend from claim 26, incorporating all of its limitations. For the reasons stated above with respect to claim 26, Applicants believe claims 28 through 30 are now in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103

The Examiner rejected claim 31 - 36, saying they were rendered obvious by U.S. Patent 5,201,627 (Biedenbach) in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,911,690 (Sanford), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,580,780 (Gautraud).

Claims 31 through 36 now depend from claim 26, incorporating all of its limitations. For the reasons stated above with respect to claim 26, Applicants believe claims 31 through 36 are now in condition for allowance.

It is believed that no new matter has been added by these amendments. Support for these amendments is found in the drawings.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully request that a Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,
LAW OFFICE OF JAMES R. CYPHER

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By /s Charles R. Cypher /
Charles R. Cypher
Reg. No. 41,694
Tel.: (510) 832-4111